

STAYING GREEN

July 2006

"A Green Business is a conscious business—one that is aware of the need and responsibility to create an environmentally sustainable community in acts both small and large."

Alexandra DeAvalon,
Avalon: A Place for
Body and Spirit,
Lafayette

GREEN TIPS...Greening your energy

OK, you've really done everything you can to conserve energy, attending to lighting and building efficiency, and you've reduced the impact of driving—reducing the overall amount, driving slower, inflating those tires, keeping the car tuned, not idling and turning off the A/C in stop & go traffic when you can.



So what's next to reduce your carbon footprint and those CO2 emissions? Because 98% of electricity comes from non-renewable sources, your purchase of green power will help support the use of renewable energy—such as wind, solar, geothermal, small hydro and biomass.

How? Check out several websites (it'll take about an hour) that allow you to calculate your current carbon emissions and then pay a certain amount (\$50/year/smaller vehicle) to offset those emissions. The websites work in slightly different ways, and I want to give you some of the most reputable and effective ones: green-e.org (local, non-profit, highly reputable, a leader), terra-pass.com (profit but very reputable) and cooldriver.org (non-profit, based in northwest US) all are good sites, directly funding renewable energy projects.

Green-e is a program sponsored by the Center for Resource Solutions, which certifies and verifies that your dollars are being used correctly; terra-pass.com also has third-party verification. One more site, driveneutral.org (local, non-profit), uses your monies to buy carbon credits off the Chicago Climate Exchange, thereby increasing the value of the credits that the large industrial companies are paying in that exchange and thus increasing invest-

COOL WEBSITES

Builditgreen.org is the leader in helping us find green remodelers and green materials. They have a new Access Green Directory that will help you search locally for materials. And if you love Craig's List, you will love **Freecycle.org**. Folks from local cities, by

email, give and get totally free stuff—a chair, fax machine, old door, desk, or whatever. And lest you think we are too serious, enjoy an ecological vacation by visiting Rainforest Alliance's new **Ecoindex.org/tourism** website (almost online)!



GETTING TO KNOW OUR GREEN BUSINESSES: THE MECHANICS BANK

Going green an employee-inspired effort—that's the theme that runs through this \$2.7 billion bank headquartered in Contra Costa. In certifying their Concord, Walnut Creek & North Berkeley branches, going Green seemed like an obvious and natural extension of the bank's community banking mission—and they did it from the ground up.

"We want to reflect and support the values of our customers," said Jayne Sanford, Walnut Creek Regl. Manager. "And they care about the environment and sustainability."

In each case, certification

was an employee-led effort that garnered strong management support—as exemplified by Nishad Patel, a Walnut Creek Sr. Customer Service Rep. who's also earning a degree in Ecology at San Francisco State University. Thanks to a Geography of Garbage class, he discovered how much waste we generate and how large an issue it is to handle it all. "After seeing mountains of trash in dumps that had not even begun to biodegrade after months, I decided we *had* to be part of the solution." So, with fellow employees and managers, they found



A zillion paper clips inspired Nishad Patel to green the

ways to reduce waste and increase recycling—from paper to paper clips

"We take pride in the fact that each office has independently decided to be certified," said Sanford. "Employees see that they really can make a difference through their commitment."

GREEN TIPS (CONTD.)

ment in renewables. Do this for your customers and employees (encouraging them to do the same!), to show your leadership, and mostly for our world.

WELCOME NEW GREEN BUSINESSES!

Antioch Chamber of Commerce
Antioch City Fleet Mtce.
Armanino McKenna LLP, San Ramon
Avalon--A Place for Body and Soul, Lafayette
Bay Commercial Bank, Walnut Creek
Beyaz & Patel, Inc., Walnut Creek
Brecht Construction, Lafayette
Brentwood City Fleet Mtce.
Budget Blinds of the Delta, Brentwood
Concord City Printing Svcs

CMG Mortgage Services, San Ramon
Eurest Dining Services/BofA, Concord
Evaluation Focused Consulting, Pinole
Excellent Packaging, Richmond
HAUS, El Cerrito
Katovich Law Group, El Cerrito
Mechanics Bank, Concord & Walnut Creek
Melaleuca, Pleasant Hill
MSRC, Richmond
Nature's Bounty, Antioch

NuWest Textile Group, Concord
Ortogo, Walnut Creek
Pacific Bay Coffee, Walnut Creek
Prospect Sierra School, El Cerrito
Quality Solar, Alamo
Simon Systemz, San Ramon
The Newsletter Guy, Pinole
Tri-Valley Cleaning Services, San Ramon
Velocity Lock & Key, Richmond
Walnut Creek City Hall

WHAT'S UP IN THE PROGRAM?

New Look—Look for a whole new look for the Green Business Program that we're unveiling in the fall! We worked with Digital Hive, a PR firm, to craft both a marketing plan for the program and a new look! Let us know what you think!

New cards for customers—you'll first see the new look in cards for customers that we will be making available to you in the fall. Now you can just hand a customer a card when they ask what it means to be a Green Business!

Send me email changes! With 250 Green Businesses it's become a challenge to keep up with email changes, so please send them in!

Full Page CCTimes Ad—I hope you saw your business name listed in the April 25, 2006 Contra Costa Times ad. It was so full of business names that we're outgrowing the one page!

